



TONTO NATIONAL FOREST

# NEWS RELEASE

*Tonto National Forest, 2324 East McDowell Road, Phoenix, Arizona 85006* <http://www.fs.usda.gov/tonto>

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**For Immediate Release  
November 1, 2011**

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## **Wilderness Stewards wanted on Tonto National Forest**

Mesa, Ariz. (November 1, 2011). Openings for wilderness steward volunteers in the Superstition and Four Peaks wildernesses on the Tonto National Forest were announced today by forest officials.

"The district is operating at reduced staffing levels, so wilderness stewards provide an invaluable service to the district by serving as hosts at trailheads and providing hiker assistance," said district ranger Art Wirtz. "With more than 250 miles of trails, and portions of three Wilderness areas to manage, our wilderness stewards provide a critical service to the hiking community.

"We provide in-depth training to our volunteers about the forest and their responsibilities. It's also a great way to keep physically fit and enjoy the beauty of the desert while serving others."

The Wilderness Stewards wear Forest Service volunteer uniforms and serve as the "eyes and ears" of the district on many of the trails in the Superstition Wilderness, particularly First Water and Peralta trails.

Wilderness steward volunteers can sign up for the program online at [www.mrdvolunteers/wildernessstewards.org](http://www.mrdvolunteers/wildernessstewards.org), or call Mesa Ranger District at 480-610-3300.

Volunteers who are interested in other opportunities can find information on the Mesa Ranger District Volunteer Program at [www.mrdvolunteers.org](http://www.mrdvolunteers.org), or call Mesa Ranger District at 480-610-3300.